



SPRUCE UP YOUR DWELLING

HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS AVAILABLE

THE BLOOMINGTON HOUSING AND Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is now accepting applications for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program.

Loans of up to \$30,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at a simple 5 percent per year rate for the first 10 years based on the original loan amount.

Loans are offered to help maintain the condition of housing and neighborhoods. Applications are ranked and processed according to need.

A lead risk assessment is required for all homes built before 1978.

Eligible repairs include: replacement of roofs, electrical and plumbing systems; gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia; exterior painting and foundation, sidewalk or step repairs.

Ineligible repairs include: decorating; additions; finishing basements; remodeling and garage construction. Homeowner labor will no longer be permitted, due to federal lead paint regulations.

To apply for a Home Improvement Deferred Loan, you must have sufficient equity in your home to cover the amount of the loan. Income guidelines apply. *See table below.*

INCOME GUIDELINES

| Persons in household* | Maximum gross income** |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | \$40,600 |
| 2 | \$40,600 |
| 3 | \$52,200 |
| 4 | \$58,000 |
| 5 | \$62,650 |
| 6 | \$67,300 |
| 7 | \$71,900 |
| 8 or more | \$76,500 |

* Includes all residents of household, related and unrelated, including renters.

** Subject to change.



Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, until Friday, March 10, 2006. For more information or to receive an application, call 952-563-8937.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

How can we serve you today?

CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

BLOOMINGTON’S REAL-LIFE CRIME TECH PROGRAM

ON AUGUST 17, 2005, BLOOMINGTON POLICE officers responded to an attempted burglary and noticed a trace of blood near the window where the suspect tried to gain entry. Crime Tech Kim Peterson collected the evidence that was then processed. The DNA results matched a local convicted felon.

Before the Crime Tech Program began in 2004, Police relied on an outside agency to gather and process evidence. Today, the Police maintain their own equipment and trained staff.

“We use Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office crime labs for collecting evidence from major crimes,” Sergeant Todd Lewis said. “But now that we can do it ourselves, we have more insight into investigations and can better use resources.”



Twelve police officers are trained in crime-scene processing, including latent fingerprinting, impression casting and photography, crime-scene diagramming and retrieval of biological and trace evidence.

“With a little investment in training and equipment we knew we could enhance service to our citizens,” said Police Chief John Laux. “The bottom line is more criminals are going to jail because we have this program.”

Two years ago, a Bloomington jewelry store was robbed. The suspect left blood evidence behind and the Police were able to establish a DNA profile. They now have an arrest warrant for the suspect’s DNA that does not expire under the statute of limitations – one of the first law enforcement agencies in the country



All stolen vehicles are dusted for fingerprints. Several times Police have found a match to the suspect.

to do so. Recently, evidence from similar crimes committed in New York and North Carolina matched the DNA of Bloomington’s suspect. Sergeant Lewis said it’s just a matter of time before the suspect is caught.

“We might not solve a crime today,” said Lewis. “But months or years later we can reopen files and cases can be solved as a result of the collection of evidence.”

HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

DO YOU HAVE HOME IMPROVEMENT PLANS this winter and spring? To protect your health and safety and the integrity of your home, the City may require a permit for some remodeling projects.



In general, if you alter, enlarge, repair, replace or demolish elements of your home or garage, a **building permit** is required. Cosmetic improvements, including painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, and installing cabinets or countertops, do not require permits.

Extensive projects may also require:

- An **electrical permit** if the project involves reconfiguring or adding new electrical wiring.
- A **plumbing permit** to cover installation or replacement of new or existing plumbing fixtures.
- A **heating permit** for items related to heating, air conditioning or air quality, such as bathroom fans.

A number of residential permits for plumbing, electrical, basement finishes, egress windows, siding, roofing, driveways, decks, demolition and some minor remodeling projects can be issued immediately.

Information about permits and associated handouts that provide summaries and guides to Code requirements are available online.

For more information, call Building and Inspections at 952-563-8930 or visit the City’s Web site at ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: inspection reviews.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR PROPERTY

DON’T FEED WILD ANIMALS

EACH YEAR BLOOMINGTON POLICE RECEIVE several hundred calls from residents who have problems with wild animals. While wild animals contribute to our enjoyment of nature, they can also damage property and threaten human health and safety. For this reason, the City has an ordinance that prohibits feeding raccoons at any time and feeding deer from November 1 through March 15.

Animal Control Officer Bill Forbes said while the City doesn’t prohibit feeding of

all wild animals, common sense dictates that you should not feed them.

“Feeding attracts a disproportionate number of animals that can have harmful consequences for both animals and humans,” Forbes said. “Urban wildlife species are establishing a new ecosystem and we need to make sure that we don’t upset that, no matter how well intentioned we are.”

For information, call 952-563-4942.



GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT – THE *BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING*



“How much does it cost to print and mail the *Bloomington Briefing*?”
A Bloomington resident

IN THE EARLY 1970s, THE CITY BEGAN producing a two-color, four-page newsletter to keep residents informed on City issues. To save money, other City publications were consolidated into the eight-page, bimonthly *Bloomington Briefing* in 1993. Today, thanks to improvements in technology, the full-color *Briefing* can be printed and mailed

to all households and businesses for just 25 cents per issue or \$1.50 per year, which is less than one-quarter of one percent the average homeowner pays in property taxes. For more information, call Communications Administrator Diann Kirby at 952-563-8818 or e-mail dkirby@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

FEBRUARY 2006

- PAGE 2. Strategic planning by Mayor Gene Winstead.
- PAGE 3. 2006 Budget approved.
- PAGE 4. Community News.
- PAGE 5. Earth Action Heroes.
- PAGE 6. Parks and Recreation.
- PAGE 7. Explore the arts.
- PAGE 8. Home improvement.

SNOW ALERTS ONLINE GO TO THE CITY'S WEB SITE

NOTICES ABOUT SNOW ALERTS, WATCHES and emergencies are now posted on the front page of the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.

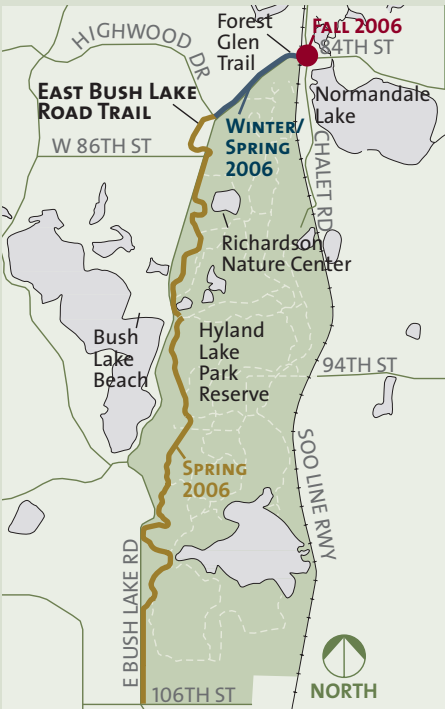
TASTE OF JAPAN



BSCO CULTURAL EVENING

JOIN THE BLOOMINGTON Sister City Organization (BSCO) for an evening of Japanese food and entertainment,

interactive activities and a silent auction. Taste of Japan will be held on **Saturday, March 11**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road. For more information, call 952-563-8713.



EAST BUSH LAKE ROAD TRAIL UNDER CONSTRUCTION

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKEWAY improvements that began last June along East Bush Lake Road from 105th to 84th Street are continuing this winter. Over the last few months, Xcel Energy has been performing utility relocations, including tree trimming and removals, along East Bush Lake Road between Highwood Drive and 84th Street. Trail improvements are now underway in this area. When completed, new and existing trails will create a 3.34-mile trail with access to Hyland Lake Park Reserve, Bush Lake Beach, Richardson Nature Preserve, Forest Glen Trail and Normandale Lake. Completion of the trail from 105th Street to west of 84th Street is scheduled for summer 2006. Connection to 84th Street at Chalet Road will begin in fall 2006. For more information, call 952-563-4914.

A POTHOLE PRIMER WARMER WINTER WEATHER PRODUCES POTHOLES

UNSEASONABLY WARM WEATHER HAS potholes popping up all over. Street Maintenance is busy repairing potholes that usually aren't a concern until spring.

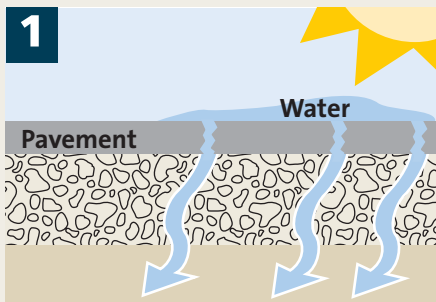
"There are more potholes this year because warmer weather has increased

freeze/thaw cycles. Snow and ice melt during the day, seep into cracks, freeze at night and pop out the pavement," Street Maintenance Supervisor Jim Eiler said.

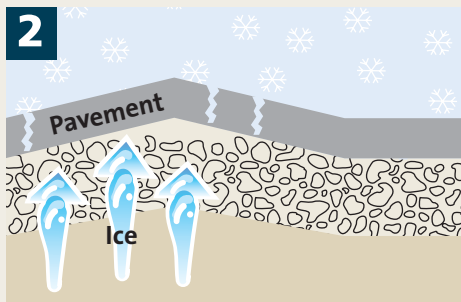
"Weather permitting, we try to send the crews out everyday to fill potholes."

Every effort is made to repair potholes within 24 hours of notification. To report potholes, call Maintenance at 952-563-8760 or visit the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: Potholes.

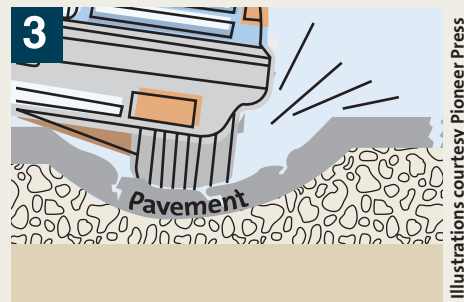
EVOLUTION OF A POTHOLE



Warm weather melts ice and snow, filling pavement cracks with water.



As temperatures drop, the water freezes and expands, breaking up the pavement.



Traffic further breaks up the surface, creating potholes.

Illustrations courtesy Pioneer Press

BLOOMINGTON CENTRAL STATION HOUSING, HOTEL AND CENTRAL PARK ENVISIONED IN NEXT PHASES

A TRAIN ARRIVING AT THE MALL OF AMERICA LAST NOVEMBER CARRIED HIAWATHA LIGHT-Rail Line's 10 millionth customer, nine months ahead of Metro Transit's schedule. The Hiawatha Line has become the most popular transit route in the region and development along the line is accelerating.

McGough Development, who is using Bloomington Central light-rail station as the focal point of its \$700 million development project, is gearing up to begin construction on its next phases, moving Airport South closer to a transit-oriented development district.

Reflections, right, is Bloomington Central Station's first phase. The 263-unit condominium project is scheduled for completion this June. Approximately 85 percent of the units have already been sold.

The project's next phases include a **150-unit condominium and townhome complex** with underground parking, **below right**, a 350-room full-service hotel and a 1.5-acre central park. Construction could begin in the spring after plans are approved.

The 43-acre Bloomington Central Station development project will be built in five phases over 12 years. To view an animated version of the project, visit the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Central Station. For more information, call 952-563-8925.



Phase I: Reflections.



Phase II: 150-unit residential complex.



The 1.5-acre park, above, designed to reflect the surrounding architecture, will be located at the center of the development. Construction of the \$3.5 million park will be funded with \$800,000 in transit-oriented development grants from Hennepin County and \$2.7 million in grants from the Metropolitan Council. Proposed amenities include seating areas, garden rooms, water features, and paved and lighted walkways. The public park will be maintained and operated by McGough.

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